

(iii) *Internal evaluation.* Effectiveness of the planned continuous internal evaluation of program activities.

(iv) *Plans for financial matching.* Demonstrated stability and duration of the applicant's funding commitments as well as the percentage of operating and capital costs guaranteed by the applicant. Identification of matching fund sources and the general terms of the funding commitments. Evidence of the applicant's ability to become self-sustaining in six years.

(v) *Budget.* Suitability and focus of the applicant's detailed one-year budget and six-year budget outline.

§ 290.7 Proposal selection process.

Upon the availability of funding to establish Regional Centers, the Director shall publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER requesting submission of proposals from interested organizations. Applicants will be given an established time frame, not less than 60 days from the publication date of the notice, to prepare and submit a proposal. The proposal evaluation and selection process will consist of four principal phases: Proposal qualification; Proposal review and selection of finalists; Finalist site visits; and, Award determination. Further descriptions of these phases are provided in the following:

(a) *Proposal qualification.* All proposals will be reviewed by NIST to assure compliance with § 290.5 of these procedures. Proposals which satisfy these requirements will be designated qualified proposals; all others will be disqualified at this phase of the evaluation and selection process.

(b) *Proposal review and selection of finalists.* The Director of NIST will appoint an evaluation panel to review and evaluate all qualified proposals in accordance with the criteria set forth in section 290.6 of these procedures, assigning equal weight to each of the four categories. From the qualified proposals, a group of finalists will be selected based on this review.

(c) *Finalist site visits.* NIST representatives will visit each finalist organization. Finalists will be reviewed and assigned numeric scores using the criteria set forth in § 290.6 of these procedures assigning equal weight to each of

the four categories. NIST may enter into negotiations with the finalists concerning any aspect of their proposal.

(d) *Award determination.* The Director of NIST or his designee shall select awardees for Center Operating Awards based upon the rank order of applicants, the need to assure appropriate regional distribution, and the availability of funds. Upon the final award decision, a notification will be made to each of the proposing organizations.

§ 290.8 Reviews of centers.

(a) *Overview.* Each Center will be reviewed at least annually, and at the end of its third year of operation according to the procedures and criteria set out below. There will be regular management interaction with NIST and the other Centers for the purpose of evaluation and program shaping. Centers are encouraged to try new approaches, must evaluate their effectiveness, and abandon or adjust those which do not have the desired impact.

(b) *Annual reviews of centers.* Centers will be reviewed annually as part of the funding renewal process using the criteria set out in § 290.8(d). The funding level at which a Center is renewed is contingent upon a positive program evaluation and will depend upon the availability of federal funds and on the Center's ability to obtain suitable match, as well as on the budgetary requirements of its proposed program. Centers must continue to demonstrate that they will be self-supporting after six years.

(c) *Third year review of centers.* Each host receiving a Center Operating Award under these procedures shall be evaluated during its third year of operation by a Merit Review Panel appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. Each such Merit Review Panel shall be composed of private experts, none of whom shall be connected with the involved Center, and Federal officials. An official of NIST shall chair the panel. Each Merit Review Panel shall measure the involved Center's performance against the criteria set out in § 290.8(d). The Secretary shall not provide funding for the fourth through the sixth years of such Center's operation unless the evaluation is positive on all

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grounds. As a condition of receiving continuing funding, the Center must show evidence at the third year review that they are making substantial progress toward self-sufficiency. If the evaluation is positive and funds are available, the Secretary of Commerce may provide continued funding through the sixth year at declining levels, which are designed to insure that the Center no longer needs financial support from NIST by the seventh year. In no event shall funding for a Center be provided by the NIST Manufacturing Technology Centers Program after the sixth year of support.

(d) *Criteria for annual and third year reviews.* Centers will be evaluated under the following criteria in each of the annual reviews, as well as the third year review:

(1) The program objectives specified in § 290.3(b) of these procedures;

(2) Funds-matching performance;

(3) The extent to which the target firms have successfully implemented recently developed or currently developed advanced manufacturing technology and techniques transferred by the Center;

(4) The extent to which successes are properly documented and there has been further leveraging or use of a particular advanced manufacturing technology or process;

(5) The degree to which there is successful operation of a network, or technology delivery mechanism, involving the sharing or dissemination of information related to manufacturing technologies among industry, universities, nonprofit economic development organizations and state governments.

(6) The extent to which the Center can increasingly develop continuing resources—both technological and financial—such that the Centers are finally financially self-sufficient.

§ 290.9 Intellectual property rights.

(a) Awards under the Program will follow the policies and procedures on ownership to inventions made under grants and cooperative agreements that are set out in Public Law 96-517 (35 U.S.C. chapter 18), the Presidential Memorandum on Government Patent Policy to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies Dated Feb-

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ruary 18, 1983, and part 401 of title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as appropriate. These policies and procedures generally require the Government to grant to Centers selected for funding the right to elect to obtain title to any invention made in the course of the conduct of research under an award, subject to the reservation of a Government license.

(b) Except as otherwise specifically provided for in an Award, Centers selected for funding under the Program may establish claim to copyright subsisting in any data first produced in the performance of the award. When claim is made to copyright, the funding recipient shall affix the applicable copyright notice of 17 U.S.C. 401 or 402 and acknowledgment of Government sponsorship to the data when and if the data are delivered to the Government, are published, or are deposited for registration as a published work in the U.S. Copyright Office. For data other than computer software, the funding recipient shall grant to the Government, and others acting on its behalf, a paid up, nonexclusive, irrevocable, worldwide license for all such data to reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies to the public, and perform publicly and display publicly, by or on behalf of the Government. For computer software, the funding recipient shall grant to the Government, and others acting on its behalf, a paid up, nonexclusive, irrevocable, worldwide license for all such computer software to reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies to the public, and perform publicly and display publicly, by or on behalf of the Government.

PART 291—MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP; ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Sec.

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